

Justices							
Confidence Score	Mild Republican	Mild Republican	Mild Democrat	Mild Republican	Indeterminate	Strong Democrat	Mild Republican
Opinion Partners			✓				✓
Dissenting Minority		✓		✓			
Determining Majority	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Lone Dissenter							

- ▶ Number of justices: **7**
- ▶ Number of cases: **55**
- ▶ Percentage of cases with a unanimous ruling: **96.4% (53)**
- ▶ Justice most often writing the majority opinion: **Justice McCullough (10)**
- ▶ Per curiam decisions: **7**
- ▶ Concurring opinions: **0**
- ▶ Dissenting opinions: **2**
- ▶ Justice with most dissenting opinions: **Justice Kelsey (2)**

COURT CONTENTION

Opinion partners

There was only one case in 2020 in which two justices dissented together against the majority. In that case, Justices Kelsey and Powell were opinion partners. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Kelsey recorded a Mild Republican Confidence Score and Justice Powell recorded a Mild Democratic Confidence Score.

Dissenting minority

There was only one case in 2020 decided by split decision. In that case, Justices Chafin, Kelsey, and Lemons were the dissenting minority. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justices Chafin, Kelsey, and Lemons each recorded a Mild Republican Confidence Score.

Determining majority

In the one case decided by split decision in 2020, Justices Goodwyn, McCullough, Mims, and Powell were the determining majority. In our *Ballotpedia Courts: State Partisanship* study, Justice Goodwyn recorded an Indeterminate Confidence Score, Justice McCullough recorded a Strong Republican Confidence Score, Justice Mims recorded a Mild Republican Confidence Score, and justice Powell recorded a Mild Democratic Confidence Score.

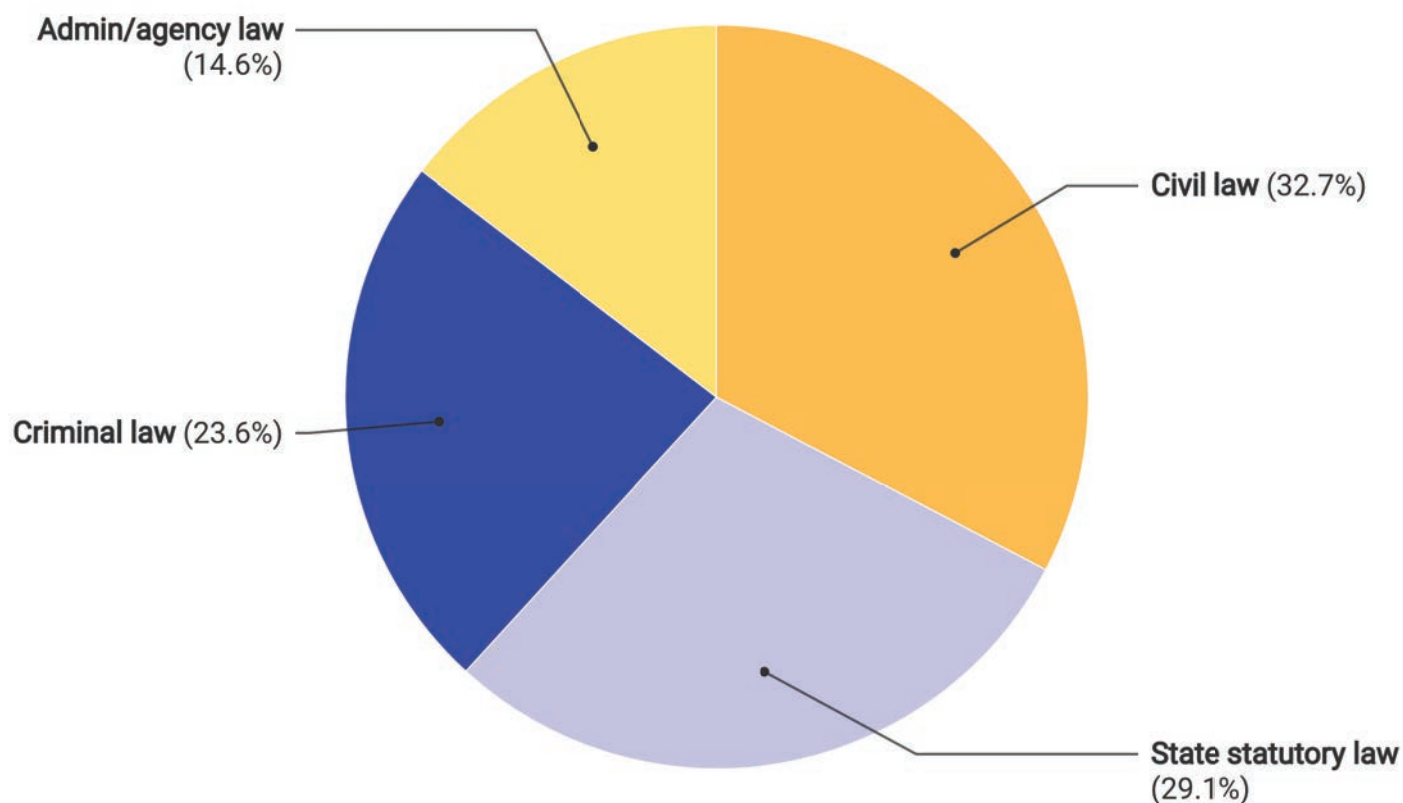
Lone dissenter

No justice on the Virginia Supreme Court dissented alone in 2020.

COURT JURISDICTION

The court's primary function is to review lower court decisions, and state law does not allow appeals to the court "as a matter of right" except where the State Corporation Commission, the disbarment of an attorney, or a review of the death penalty is involved. The court has both original and appellate jurisdiction. Original jurisdiction is limited to matters filed by the Virginia Judicial Inquiry and Review Commission (on the topics of judicial censure, retirement, and the removal of judges) and to cases of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, and "writs of actual innocence pursuant to Virginia's Code § 19.2-327.2."

Case types decided by Supreme Court of Virginia, 2020



BALLOTPEDIA

The most common cases heard by the Virginia Supreme Court in 2020 were civil cases. Of the 55 cases it heard, 18 were civil law cases, or 32.7 percent of its total caseload for the year. A civil case is one that involves a dispute between two parties, one of whom seeks reparations or damages.

The second most common cases that reached the supreme court were state statutory cases. A state statutory case involves the violation or enforcement of a state statute. The Virginia Supreme Court heard 16 state statutory law cases in 2020, or 29.1 percent of its total caseload for the year.

The third most common cases that reached the court were criminal law cases. A criminal case involves a final criminal appeal before the court of last resort. The Virginia Supreme Court heard 13 criminal law cases in 2020, or 23.6 percent of its total caseload for the year.